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Jim Hubbard, (202) 225-2671
Sara Howard, (314) 962-1523

Defense Appropriations Will Help Keep Military Prepared, Keep Thousands of St. Louisans at Work

(WASHINGTON, DC) - Congressman Russ Carnahan (MO-3) kept his commitment to our troops and their families during this time of war, making sure they are strongly supported on the battlefield and when they return home by voting today for the Defense Appropriations Act, which passed overwhelmingly with bipartisan support.

"It's absolutely crucial that our troops are prepared for battle with the best possible equipment," said Congressman Carnahan. **"This bill makes key investments in troop readiness so that every American soldier has what he or she needs to protect themselves, their fellow soldiers and our country."**

The Defense Appropriations Act provides our military with the weapons and equipment they need to fight the wars of today and tomorrow; and for the first time since the beginning of operations in Iraq, this bill also budgets for Overseas Deployments and Other Activities in Afghanistan and Iraq for the upcoming fiscal year.

"St. Louis plays a critical role for our military," said Carnahan. **"Our unmatched workforce has continued to have a major role in providing vital equipment to our brave men and women on-time and on budget."**

The following St. Louis area projects were included in today's funding bill:

- **C-17s:** \$2.5 billion for 10 additional C-17 cargo planes **keeping approximately 900 area employees on the job.**
- **F-18 Super Hornet:** \$1.5 billion for 18 F/A-18E/F Super Hornet Tactical aircraft,
- **EA-18G Growler:** \$1.6 billion for 22 EA-18G Growler electronic attack aircraft, **the Super Hornet and Growler lines employ approximately 3,200 St. Louis area**

employees.

- **Future Combat Systems:** \$2.2 billion for continued development of the restructured Future Combat Systems Program.

The Appropriations bill also keeps our commitments to our troops and their families by including a 3.4% pay raise for our military. We also continue to pay our troops an additional \$500 for every month their term of service is involuntarily extended by the practice of stop loss.

The bill makes a commitment to fiscal responsibility - reigning in expensive outsourcing so that defense personnel, not contractors, perform critical department functions.

"While our country is burdened by the expense of two wars during tough economic times my focus has been to invest responsibly in key military priorities that will protect our country and grow jobs to improve our economy," said Congressman Carnahan. **"St. Louis is poised to continue its leading role under this new Defense bill."**

To help Americans hit hardest by this recession, this bill also provides emergency relief by extending unemployment insurance, helping with health insurance premiums through the COBRA program, and funding for nutrition assistance programs to help families in need put food on their table.

Carnahan, as co-chair of the Congressional Multiple Sclerosis Caucus, also worked to include \$4.5 million to investigate and research possible causes of Multiple Sclerosis affecting Gulf War veterans.

"We owe it to the brave Gulf War veterans who have proudly served their nation to look into the causes of the higher rate of veterans affected by Multiple Sclerosis and to research possible cures to give them hope," said Carnahan.

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